

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARIANS ON U.S. TELEVISION

SUMMARY:

IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE NBC MORNING TV SHOW "TODAY" MAY 1, MEMBERS OF THE VISITING EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, GAMAL OTEIFI AND LEILA TAKLA STRESSED THE PRESSING EGYPTIAN DESIRE FOR PEACE AND THEIR FLEXIBLE APPROACH TOWARD ACHIEVING IT. THEY ACCENTUATED THE POSITIVE, WITH ONLY MUTED CRITICISM OF ISRAEL. LEILA TAKLA, WHO CAME ACROSS AS ARTICULATE AND SOPHISTICATED, PRAISED SECRETARY KISSINGER'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST. HE HAD REMINDED THEM, SHE SAID, THAT THE U.S. HAS A SPECIAL RELATION WITH ISRAEL -- ADDING "WE ARE NOT QUARRELLING ABOUT THAT." SHE STATED THAT THE UNITED STATES AND EGYPT BOTH SEE IT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO

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HAVE PEACE, AND IF "THE OTHER PARTY" ALSO WANTS THE

SITUATION SOLVED--IT WILL BE SOLVED. END SUMMARY.

1. GAMAL OTEIFI AND LEILA TAKLA WERE INTERVIEWED BY CHARLES QUINN IN WASHINGTON ON THE NBC TELEVISION MORNING SHOW "TODAY" MAY 1. FOLLOWING ARE THE MAIN POINTS OF THE INTERVIEW, IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY WERE MADE.

2. OTEIFI ALLOWED THAT IT ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT GENEVA CONFERENCE WILL FAIL, AND THAT SITUATION IS "VERY EXPLOSIVE." BUT HE ASKED QUESTIONER (CHARLES QUINN) WHY HE PUT THE QUESTION IN NEGATIVE--ABOUT FAILURE, RATHER THAN CONSEQUENCES OF GENEVA SUCCESS. HE STRESSED THAT EGYPT HAD SHOWN ITS FLEXIBILITY, HAD ACCEPTED THE STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH OF SECRETARY KISSINGER, IN AN EFFORT TO SET A FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR GENEVA. THAT MISSION HAD FAILED, BUT "EVERYONE KNOWS THAT WE WERE NOT AT FAULT."

3. TAKLA SAID THAT EGYPT DID ALL IT COULD, SHORT OF SAYING TO ISRAEL--"HERE IS OUR LAND, TAKE IT." EGYPT HAD REGARDED THE SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY OF KISSINGER AS ONE WAY TO APPROACH PEACE. THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS ANOTHER. I AM SURE THAT THERE ARE OTHER POSSIBILITIES IN PREPARATION FOR GENEVA. IT WAS NOT OUR FAULT THAT SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY FAILED. WHEN IT FAILED, THE EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT HAD VOTED A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT AT THE BREAK-DOWN, WHILE THE ISRAELI KNESSET HAD VOTED 92-4 HAILING IT. OUR GOAL IS PEACE. THE ISRAELIS MAY WANT PEACE, BUT WHEN YOU WANT IT, YOU MUST WORK FOR IT--IT CANNOT BE HANDED TO YOU ON A GOLDEN TRAY.

4. OTEIFI CITED PRESIDENT SADAT'S OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL EVEN AFTER THE BREAKDOWN AS PROOF THAT EGYPT WANTS PEACE. THAT GESTURE LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN FOR FURTHER MOVES, HE SAID. ASKED ABOUT THE MEETING YESTERDAY WITH PRESIDENT FORD, OTEIFI SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ASSURED THEM THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT SUPPORT A STALEMATE OR STAGNATION IN MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE. HE ANSWERED, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT INDICATED WHAT THE U.S. WOULD DO.

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5. TAKLA SAID THAT AFTER ALL THE U.S. IS IN A REASSESSMENT OF ITS POLICY, SO WE CANNOT ASK WHAT THE U.S. IS TO DO BEFORE THAT IS FINISHED. IT WILL INDICATE THE NEW AVENUES. ASKED IF THE PRESIDENT HAD INDICATED WHEN THAT REASSESSMENT WOULD END, SHE SAID THAT "WE ARE NOT HERE TO SAY WHEN IT WILL END." SHE NOTED ONLY THAT THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY AND SISCO ARE WORKING ON IT. ASKED

IF SHE SENSED A MOVEMENT TOWARD "YOUR SIDE," SHE REPLIED THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS SHOWING UNDERSTANDING OF OUR TRUE SITUATION. SECRETARY KISSINGER IS NOT PRO-ARAB, SHE SAID, "HE IS PRO-AMERICAN. HE'S THINKING OF THE INTERESTS OF HIS OWN COUNTRY. I RESPECT THAT," SHE

SAID. KISSINGER IS AN ABLE MAN, HE UNDERSTANDS THE DYNAMICS THERE, HE UNDERSTANDS OUR SITUATION. HE HAD TOLD THEM, SHE SAID, THAT THEY MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND "THAT THERE IS A SPECIAL RELATION WITH ISRAEL. WE ARE NOT QUARRELING ABOUT THAT."

6. OTEIFI, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT A "NO WAR, NO PEACE" STRATEGY, SAID THAT AFTER OCT. 6, 1973, THE SITUATION CHANGED. TAKLA CAME IN AND SAID THAT THERE WOULD NEVER BE ANOTHER JUNE 5TH 1967--THE SITUATION BEFORE OCTOBER 1973 WAS NOT LIKE THE SITUATION TODAY. OTEIFI SAID THAT THE THREE-MONTH EXTENSION OF THE UN MANDATE (UNEF) WOULD GIVE THE WORLD A CHANCE TO REEXAMINE THE SITUATION. WE CANNOT GO BACK TO NO WAR, NO PEACE, HE SAID, IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE. WE NEED THE MONEY TO DEVELOP.

7. TAKLA SAID THAT EGYPT CANNOT AFFORD WAR. IT IS NOT GIVEN WEAPONS, IT MUST BUY THEM. EGYPT NEEDS THAT MONEY TO DEVELOP. PRESSED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF ANOTHER WAR, SHE TOLD THE INTERVIEWER--"ARE YOU TRYING TO GET ME TO SAY WE WILL MAKE ANOTHER WAR, CHUCK?" SHE WENT ON--I HOPE WE WILL NOT HAVE WAR. IF THE ROLE OF THE FORD ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES, IF KISSINGER CONTINUES TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION AS IN THE PAST, SHE DID NOT THINK THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER WAR. IT IS NOT IN YOUR NATIONAL INTEREST. IF THE U.S. WANTS PEACE, IF EGYPT
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WANTS PEACE, THEN THERE IS ONLY ONE PARTY LEFT WHO MUST DECIDE. AND IF THAT PARTY WANTS THE SITUATION SOLVED, THEN IT WILL BE SOLVED.

FYI: TAHSIN BASHIR, PRESIDENT SADAT'S PRESS AFFAIRS SUPERVISOR, ALSO APPEARED MAY 1 AT THE SAME TIME ON THE ABC TELEVISION MORNING SHOW "AM." UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE NOT YET OBTAINED TRANSCRIPT OF HIS REMARKS. KISSINGER

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